

Among other suggestions made to the Governor and to the General Assembly of 1937 by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction relative to the improvement of the public schools at that time, he expressed the belief that "the State should recognize the responsibility for providing better opportunities for exceptional children, both the bright and the retarded." Later that same year further evidence of this conviction was given, when he said, "Too long have we neglected the unsuccessful school child, and in too few instances has provision been made for the successful advancement of each and every individual child enrolled in our schools."

A similar recommendation was presented in the Biennial Report of the State Superintendent for 1936-1938, as follows:

As stated in my report to the General Assembly of 1937, something should be done to give the exceptional school child, both the fast moving type and the one that is normally slow, a better opportunity to prepare himself for society. Under our present graded system, which is inevitable where large numbers are given instruction, the curriculum is organized for the average child. I believe we should not only instruct these average children, but that we should also provide instruction appropriate for these children having exceptional mental abilities.

As a logical follow-up in this connection, the General Assembly of 1937 appointed a Commission to study this whole question and "to determine ways and means of providing more suitable and adequate instruction in the public schools for exceptional children." For seemingly uncontrollable circumstances, it was not possible for the committee to function. Under the authority of legislative enactment in 1939, the work of the Commission was continued for another period for the purpose of further studying the situation before making a report of their findings and recommendations. However, no funds were provided to finance any of the activities connected with the project. In light of this fact, it is obvious, therefore, that the potential efforts of this group have been cramped and curtailed from the outset and that the results to be expected likewise may be limited to the point of diminishing returns to the individuals to be served.

Moreover, the record further points out that over a period of years the people of North Carolina have given tangible expression to their interest in the welfare of exceptional children by making special provision for the more unfortunate groups. For the most part, the needs of these individuals are being served by the